

**Voices from
The Petroleum Technology Development Fund
(PTDF)
Scholarship Application Journey**



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Disclaimer

This book is a compilation of individual screening experiences shared informally by applicants of the PTDF Overseas Scholarship Scheme. The content was voluntarily submitted through WhatsApp groups and similar forums. It is intended purely for educational and informational purposes.

Please note that this book is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or officially representative of PTDF or any of its processes. Applicants are advised to consult official PTDF communication channels for accurate and up-to-date information.

Introduction

The 'Voices from the PTDF Scholarship Application Journey' is a carefully compiled anthology of real-life screening experiences from aspiring scholars across Nigeria. These stories capture the hopes, surprises, and lessons learned during the PTDF interview and selection process.

The primary purpose of this book is to support and guide future applicants by offering insight into what to expect. The experiences reflect a wide variety of academic disciplines and geographic centres, helping candidates prepare mentally and logistically.

This compilation was curated from WhatsApp groups and other informal online networks where applicants share freely. It is meant to foster peer learning and build a stronger support system for all who dream of studying through the PTDF Scholarship Scheme.

Please feel free to share this book widely with friends, colleagues, or anyone preparing for the PTDF scholarship. May the shared voices within inspire your journey.

Understanding the PTDF Scholarship

Requirements, Structure, and How to Prepare

1. What is the PTDF Scholarship?

The PTDF (Petroleum Technology Development Fund) is a Nigerian Federal Government agency tasked with developing indigenous capacity in oil, gas, and energy sectors. One of its flagship programs is the Overseas Scholarship Scheme (OSS), which sponsors Nigerians to study in specific partner institutions abroad. This scholarship targets fields directly relevant to the oil and gas industry.

Unlike generic scholarships, PTDF is focused on national development through technical education. It selects applicants who can eventually contribute to Nigeria's energy transformation. The OSS is not open-ended—you don't choose any school or course. You must choose from an approved list of institutions and programs that align with PTDF's strategic goals.

2. What Does the Scholarship Cover?

The PTDF OSS is one of the most comprehensive scholarships available to Nigerian students. Here's what it includes—each item explained in full:

- i. **Flight Tickets:** Round-trip economy-class tickets are provided from Nigeria to your country of study and back at the end of your program. This includes both MSc and PhD awardees.
- ii. **Health Insurance:** International health insurance is included to cover essential medical care while abroad. This ensures students don't incur high hospital costs in their host countries.
- iii. **Tuition and Bench Fees:** All tuition fees are fully paid to the university. Bench fees refer to costs charged by laboratories or research units for use of equipment and services—important especially for science and engineering courses.
- iv. **Living Allowance (Stipend):** PTDF provides a monthly stipend, adjusted for cost of living in the destination country. This covers rent, food, transportation, books, and other essentials. Students are expected to manage their allowance responsibly.

Together, these benefits allow awardees to focus entirely on their studies and research without financial stress.

3. Structure of the Scholarship

There are two major study formats under the OSS:

A. Strategic International Partnerships

For MSc and PhD, PTDF partners with a list of approved universities in the UK, Germany, France, and Malaysia. These partnerships ensure quality and consistency in program delivery and relevance to oil and gas.

Applicants choose their course from a list on the PTDF portal. Importantly, only the courses listed are eligible.

B. Split-Site PhD Program (UK and Nigeria)

Starting in 2025, PhD scholarships in the UK will follow a split-site model. That means:

- The student will conduct part of the research at the **College of Petroleum and Energy Studies Kaduna (CPESK)** in Nigeria.
- The remaining portion is done at one of three UK universities (Robert Gordon University, University of Strathclyde, or University of Portsmouth).

This hybrid approach strengthens local research capacity and allows scholars to gain international exposure while applying solutions in a Nigerian context.

4. MSc Application Requirements – Explained

Each requirement below isn't just a checkbox—it has strategic reasoning behind it:

- i. **Minimum of Second-Class Upper (2:1):** PTDF seeks academic excellence. A 2:1 shows you're among the top 25–30% of your class. A 2:2 can apply only if backed by strong industry experience (e.g., years of work in oil/gas, published work, certifications).
- ii. **NYSC Completion:** This confirms you've served the nation and are eligible for federal-level benefits.
- iii. **O'Level Credits (English and Mathematics inclusive):** This reflects foundational literacy and numeracy—especially important for technical fields.
- iv. **NIN Verification:** Ensures applicants are real, unique individuals. Without this, your application will be invalidated automatically.

- v. **Computer Literacy:** Most universities abroad require digital skills—research databases, MS Word, Excel, referencing tools like Mendeley, and sometimes coding for simulations.
- vi. **Statement of Purpose (500 words max):** This is your personal pitch. It should clearly state:
 - a. *Why you chose the course* (e.g., “Environmental Engineering aligns with Nigeria’s transition to clean energy.”)
 - b. *Its relevance to oil and gas* (e.g., “My study will focus on oil spill mitigation and remediation.”)
 - c. *Your vision for Nigeria* (e.g., “Post-study, I aim to work with DPR on sustainable offshore drilling practices.”)

A well-written SOP is your voice to the panel. It should be specific, strategic, and passionate.

5. PhD Application Requirements – Explained

PhD applications are even more competitive and demand clarity of purpose:

- i. **Minimum of 2:2 and Good Postgraduate Degree:** A PhD requires both intellectual capacity and discipline. PTDF checks for a strong academic trail from undergraduate to Master’s.
- ii. **NYSC Completion & O'Level Credit:** These basic requirements ensure you meet federal guidelines.
- iii. **Research Proposal (max 5 pages):**

This must show your ability to do independent research. The five sections are:

- a. **Title/Topic:** Clear and descriptive. E.g., “Electrochemical Conversion of CO₂ to Methanol Using Nigerian-sourced Catalysts”
- b. **Introduction:** Background and problem statement.
- c. **Objectives:** 3–5 bullet points on what your research aims to achieve.
- d. **Methodology:** Your proposed experimental or theoretical approach.
- e. **Data Collection Mode:** Where and how you’ll get your data (labs, field sites, datasets).

This proposal is assessed not just for content, but also structure and clarity.

6. Required Documents – Explained

You will need to scan and upload these online:

- i. **Degree Certificates (or Statement of Result):** To verify qualifications.

- ii. **NYSC Certificate:** No substitutes.
- iii. **WAEC/NECO Results + PINs:** PTDF checks these online. Make sure the PINs are accurate and the names match.
- iv. **Passport Photograph:** Use a professional-looking, recent image.
- v. **Local Government Identification:** Confirms your state of origin, which affects your shortlist.
- vi. **Master's Certificate (PhD only):** Shows postgraduate performance.
- vii. **Professional Memberships:** Adds points. E.g., NSE, COREN, NiMechE, SPE, IAENG, etc.

7. Selection Process – Fully Explained

The PTDF selection process is **state-based and point-driven**. Here's how it works:

- i. **Initial Screening:** Your documents and application are scored based on GPA, course relevance, SOP/proposal quality, and professional memberships.
- ii. **Shortlisting by State:** PTDF allocates slots per state. Top scorers in each state are shortlisted—not necessarily the national highest.
- iii. **Interview Stage:** You're invited to defend your application before a panel. Questions may include:
 - a. "Why this course?"
 - b. "What is the relevance to oil and gas?"
 - c. "What will you do with the knowledge?"

Interviews test your confidence, clarity, and technical understanding—not perfection.

8. Disqualification Criteria – Common Mistakes to Avoid

- i. **Wrong Course Selection:** If your course is not on the PTDF-approved list, your application is disqualified.
- ii. **Duplicate Applications:** Applying more than once = automatic disqualification.
- iii. **Repeat Applications:** If you already got PTDF funding for MSc, you can't apply again for MSc.
- iv. **Other Scholarships:** If you are already funded elsewhere, you are ineligible.
- v. **Lecturer Clause:** All academic staff must provide letters from their VCs confirming they're not receiving another scholarship.

9. Deadline and Portal

Deadline: Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Application Portal: <https://scholarship.ptdf.gov.ng>

Apply early. Upload only accurate and complete documents. Keep a PDF copy of your submission.

10. Final Words to Applicants

- i. **Be strategic, not emotional.** This is not a “sob story” scholarship—it’s about competence and national relevance.
- ii. **Understand your course thoroughly.** Read university modules and know what you’re applying for.
- iii. **Practice your SOP and proposal defense.** Imagine you're already speaking to the interview panel.
- iv. **Stay hopeful but realistic.** It’s competitive. If you don’t make it, learn from the experience.

Experiences

Experience 01

Hello everyone,

Here is the detail of my experience for the MSc interview on Wednesday at the PTDF tower in Abuja. I was scheduled for noon. I arrived there by 11:20 am. While waiting patiently, I interacted with other MSc candidates, walked around and noticed how well the Facilities in the tower were maintained appropriately. 👍 👍

I queued until I shunted my way forward and was able to go in for the interview around 5 pm. I walked in and greeted a man and 1 woman (1 man by my RHS, the middle chair was empty and the woman by my LHS). They asked me to sit. They asked for my name and field of study, and I told them. The woman requested the spelling of my name while the RHS man requested my documents. I had arranged all my docs from the portal slip with barcode, BEng, WAEC, NYSC, membership and publication and hand over to him. After spelling my name, she said I have a unique name with "Ns". I said thank you, ma'am. The RHS man was screening my documents and called my better grades from WAEC for recording. Then, the middle person (a man) walked in. Naturally, I greeted him and smiled. He smiled back in response and talked about the smile. Shortly, the RHS man told them of my BEng class of honour. The middle person questioned it asking me if I am sure in Igbo, I responded I am sure in Igbo and he took it through the light scan to detect originality. Then, I got to know he is a Lecturer from the University I did my undergraduate studies, a Nigerlite and I told him I had lived in Niger state for over 11 years. That got him more interested in gist. The RHS man asked what course I applied for. I told him. The woman asked how it is relevant to the oil and gas industry. I replied to her/them. She nodded and asked if I had a professional membership. I replied and it was confirmed and scored. So, she asked If I was a lecturer, I unconsciously said not yet. But later said no when I noticed she was inquisitive. 😂😂 The RHS asked where I work. I replied. And he said the interview is over. I asked if I could go, sir. He said yes. I thanked them, stood up and left.

In summary, my interview this year was wholesome, because I was relaxed, interacted with colleagues therefore met new people, and walked around to eat to gain energy and ease myself. All of those contributed to making me feel at ease and speak audibly. Thank you to those that had shared their experiences from Monday and the ASH team for the webinar briefing.

Once you have your original BEng certificate, no need for a transcript. But if you have a statement of result, then you need the transcript to show your class of honour. When I told them I had 1 publication. I emphasised it was my undergrad research that was published and they nodded. Go with the prove

Experience 02

Good morning my prospective scholars.

I just feel like sharing my experience too. My interview was scheduled for 9:00 am yesterday at the Bauchi ATBU centre but unfortunately, I entered the interview room around 4:00 pm. The experience was a mixed one though. It was for a PhD and I expected a rigorous interview knowing fully the area of my intended research, the panellists were three and I met someone who had industry experience he worked with a shell company for several years before he opted for academics the man was well informed about my chosen area of work we interact for over 40mins or more to the extend that I had to remove my cap to defend my work seriously...it was quite amazing between us and I like everything about the interview as a first timer.

Nothing, I mean nothing except the document verification which is the first thing they did to me. I went along with over ten publications all are in the Scopus journal where I'm the leading author in most of them but they haven't looked at it at all.

I'm a COREN registered Engineer, a Member of NSE and of course a corporate member of NiMechE.

In my experience, Prayer is the ultimate thing you can do as per PTDF is concerned knowing fully the process is point-based and you're only competing with those in your state.

Our interaction here is highly commendable and it helps a lot in shaping our mindset as regards the PTDF scholarship. I hope we will continue with this spirit of togetherness till we all succeed in our various endeavours. Congratulations to those who have done their own and to those who are yet to do it I wish you success. We hope to hear from them soon in Shaa Allah.

Cheers!

Experience 03

Didn't ask much. Just asked about the course I am going for and how it helps the oil and gas industry. Then they asked me about something in chemistry and we went about a casual

discussion (in a gist manner) about a course that my school (alma mater) offered. It was quite chilled sha. They made me laugh and feel calm.

Experience 04

Not much question

Why did I choose process integration? Another question was on the importance of process integration in oil and gas with a background in chemistry (because I studied industrial chemistry). How do you optimize a system? Professional affiliation and I was done.

Experience 05

It was good. Interactive. They only asked me the relevance of my first choice and why I chose the school. After I explained, the man asked if I had any questions for them.

And that was it.

Experience 06

I just concluded my interview at PTDF Towers. Just know your research proposal and your methodology. It went well, we thank God. We in the environment were few.

Experience 07

Yes, exactly! No matter how blank one might be at that time... Just try to ask for something but should be related even if you're presuming on their behalf that it's kind of ridiculous.

While they are still going over the question, you can easily come up with a more technical question to ask afterwards. But one or two should be okay.

Experience 08

Okay. Here's the outcome of my interview at PH.

On getting in for the interview, they requested my O-level, I gave them a photocopy of it because I didn't go with the original. The man was like where is the original, I told him I didn't know they verified O-level that I got to know when I was in the venue, so I rushed out to print the soft copy. Then he collected it together with my first degree and professional membership certificates. After verification, they asked me to tell them about my SOP.

Well, after everything, then asked if I had any questions. Of course, I asked. Then one of the panellists said I was on track and that if I should rate myself, what would be my score? Well, I told him on a scale of 1 to 10, I will give myself 9, that there's always room to learn more. He then went further to say there are different criteria for grading candidates. But let's see. I am hoping to God for the best!

Experience 09

Done with mine at PH... PhD precisely! They accepted my transcript since my MSc certificate was not ready. They did the same for others because it seems most PhD students who graduated recently have not collected their certificates. They asked for and checked all documents including my publication. They asked lots of questions about my research proposal and its relevance to the oil and gas sector. I tried to convince them *sha*.

Finally, my observation is that whatever you did not upload online will not be requested from you during the interview...My observation though. Prayer mood activated from henceforth...The grace factor remains the highest...Thanks to everyone who has been helpful to others in this group.

Experience 10

Okay, In Ibadan they said if you did not bring your originals they won't attend to you. That you better go home and bring them, they will still be here from today till Friday and will still accommodate people.

Experience 11

I'm done, guys! Just be very relaxed. It's not difficult at all. Don't be too serious or talk too much.

I was asked about my course and its relationship to the oil and gas sector. I was asked a few questions about my final year project in school and a few other random questions.

Experience 12

My interview went well. PhD in Ibadan centre yesterday. Was scheduled for noon, however, priority was given to us in the PhD category, so I was in the waiting line to be interviewed even before noon. On entering, they all recognise me from previous years' interviews. They asked for my WAEC, and they decided to pick Physics, Chemistry & Further Mathematics in addition to Maths and English. They asked me for my First Degree and Second Degree and graded

accordingly. They asked for my professional membership and were particular if I am a Chartered Engineer, thank God I am. I was asked for a copy of my research proposal and I was then asked to make a presentation in 2 minutes of my work, which I did. One of the panellists queried me on printing my proposal on both pages. One of the panellists then asked if I had gotten a supervisor for my work. I said yes and I immediately presented my admission letter. I was then asked to talk about my MSc Project, which I did. After speaking for a while, one of the panellists congratulated me and said I would hear from PTDF and wished me the very best. Right now, it is prayer mode [I am always in prayer mode] and keep declaring my faith-filled words.

Experience 13

For PhD candidates no make mistake without adding references to your project proposal and use the correct referencing method.

Also, don't focus on too much general professional area talk. Focus on the area of your research project and tailor it to its relevance to the oil and gas sector.

Also, if your interview is at Ibadan, they are concerned about your O-level grades, certificate of memberships, and publications. This is based on my experience today. May God help us all



Experience 14

I did my today at Uniport. It was all about the proposal & they emphasize professional certifications. Publications were not even looked at. PhD

The thing is they have all you have submitted in the system before them. One of the panellists asked if I was a lecturer because of my publication...they only requested to see my O-level, bachelor's, and master's certificates. I was also asked to show my master's transcript.

Experience 15

Never feel bad because it appears to you that you didn't do well. It is state-based. You can perform so wonderfully by your standard and even get congratulatory messages from the interviewers and still not make it. You may feel disappointed at your performance and eventually make it. Other people from your state are scattered all over different centres in the country and are having their own experiences there. Having qualified for this interview, you are among the best. Just watch and pray.

Experience 16

I'm done, it was such a beautiful experience with the panellists. See us laughing and cracking jokes.

The first question was to tell them my motivation, and the course of studies and tie it to the oil and gas sector. Na so grammar and all forms of referencing (APA, Harvard, etc, I trust you should understand what this means 😊😊😊).

The Prof in the panel now asked if I think the bunkering guys will allow me to build the IT systems I'm proposing. *Na so I begin dance etighi with diplomacy.* That government must protect the system, mine is to build as a technical expert. *Them catch me sha* 🤪🤪🤪

Prof said I was diplomatic, that the Government won't because they're the cartels. The last comment one of them made to me was: "Your head is in the right place, congratulations."

Basically, I don't think anybody should be tense for any reason. Just ensure that you are very composed while before the panel. Don't talk too much, just answer the question you are asked then be ready to tell them about your motivation for the Scholarship (Which is indirectly your SOP) Just a little guide from the experience I had yesterday at the interview centre in Abuja. Best of Luck to us all.

Experience 17

Person enter interview spend more than 30 minutes, I enter then comot in under 10 minutes. And I was like, no be the same thing we dey interview for? Abi I should go back for extra time?

Experience 18

Please, work on your confidence too....as interactive as the interview is, if you are not confident or jovial appropriately, *na God hands we gather dey o.* Be ready to defend your course of study tooth and nails oooo. *English dey japa during interview* 😂💔. *Dey fear this question* "Talk about your SOP" 😂👉

Experience 19

Please, if you are yet to get interviewed, just hold on to whatever you might have prepared to say. Don't go about finding something else to say after getting to the center. Just relax and be ready to defend that which you have already prepared in your head and mind.

Best of luck!

Experience 20

The same with me in Bauchi... Guys, do go with all your original credentials and have a research topic even if you're an MSc candidate. Good luck.

Experience 21

I interviewed at Ibadan yesterday for a PhD. There is no need to panic. For me, it was more of a credentials check and interaction but don't get too carried away with those Professors. They'll ask what your topic of research is, why should you be sponsored to go and do it abroad rather than here in Nigeria, and how relevant is the research to the oil and gas sector.

If you have any professional membership certificates go with them. Your original certificates are also very important and above all dress corporate and be polite, audible and bold.

Experience 22

My Ibadan UI PTDF Interview experience. My track is MSc Data Science.

I arrived late 12:30 pm because of a very slow unavoidable delay but luckily for me, my name was called just 15mins after I entered the hall. So, we left the first hall to queue for accreditation which took like 30 minutes because of the queue. You enter and call the last 5 digits of your application ID. He just confirms your name and face. In 2 minutes, I was done when I entered the accreditation office from the queue.

From accreditation, we headed to our various interview offices. Offices for engineering, geoscience, and management, then two offices for any other courses (computing, and all others). There was another queue again for like 40 minutes or an hour. I entered at 2:15 pm for an interview. I finished at 2:20 pm. Just 5mins. *Some were less sef.*

My O-level was checked. Degree certificate and professional body membership. Then the man who checked my documents asked the other to take over as he was done with my documents. So, the other man asked me to say what I wrote in my SOP. The man checking my documents asked me about my state. It's mainly based on state stuff.

Experience 23

Hmmmm... Ibadan people place more emphasis on O-level (especially the 5 subjects) and "take me through your SOP and what is the relevance of your proposed course to O&G"... That's all.

Experience 24

Ensure your O-level is OK and together with your class of degree. You are competing with people from your state as it's a point-based scholarship.

Experience 25

Please answer the questions as they come. No need to overdo things. They don't have much time.

Experience 26

It was a general template for this year. I was the first to be interviewed in Engineering by my panel here in Abuja. They were quite friendly and engaging. Emphasis was on SSCE, class of degrees, membership to professional bodies and research proposal.

Experience 27

When the other panellist started, he collected my documents reading out my C's for the remaining 3 guys to record on their system. *Omo, na so one of them shout... Fear grip me immediately. Me wey no see any A or B for O-level. My matter na God hand e dey now ooo.*

Lolz. They were highly impressed with the proposal presentation but told me that I should know that it is a competition with other people from my state and hope that other candidates don't outperform my qualifications.

Experience 28

Abi oooo... Statistics for last year's awardee show that MSCs were barely up to 300 and PhD 150 across all states of the federation. One man, a head of the Federal Character Commission addressed us before the process. He said, "Do your part and expect equitable distribution" 😊

Experience 29

One: Without introducing yourself?

Another: I think before telling them what you wanna do. You can say, I will start by introducing myself... Tell them about what you have, experience and all. Then bring it down to facts and figure out why you want to go for the study. And what you tend to achieve after.

It was fine. Dress smart, my panel was concerned with dressing. The major question was the contribution of my course to the oil and gas industry.

Experience 30

First, they took a look at my original credentials and asked me to tell them what I wanted to do. This was followed by a few questions on my proposal.

Experience 31

Just a summary tip for you all, I just did mine few mins ago.

In summary, it's mostly an interactive section based on your course of study and SOP. It takes not more than 5-10mins depending on how interactive it becomes (this usually happens when you have a Dr or Prof in your field).

Experience 32

Please, just make sure you have tied your course of study to how relevant it will be for PTDF (Oil and Gas sector). It's very important, even if they didn't ask you specifically, try to enlightened them. It's actually part of their criteria for SOP and they ask it in most cases.

Experience 33

It's not always a big deal so nothing to panic about.

Experience 34

Again, I think the WAEC result has reasonable marks awarded to five compulsory subjects related to your course.

Experience 35

So, the interview is just one section, the documents you're presenting matter too, so dust them and the rest should be Grace.

Experience 36

Good morning, Beautiful Family. I just finished my interview a few minutes ago. Please for those yet to be interviewed, please focus more on your research proposal. I was asked to use 2 minutes to present my research. Also asked the age of the basin I want to carry out the research on. What is the source rock in the Anambra basin? I was not asked for publication. My center was at the University of Port Harcourt.

I just want to thank the organisers of this group in a special way for their mentorship and those who took their time to review my proposal and provide answer to my questions. I say thank you all. God bless you beyond measure and grant your secret prayers.

Experience 37

My interview went well. PhD in Ibadan centre yesterday. I was scheduled for noon, however, priority was given to us in the PhD category, so I was in the waiting line to be interviewed even before noon. On entering, they all recognised me from the previous year's interview. They asked for my WAEC, and they decided to pick Physics, Chemistry & Further Mathematics in addition to Maths and English. They asked me for my First Degree and Second Degree and graded accordingly. They asked for my professional membership and were particular if I am a Chartered Engineer, thank God I am. I was asked for a copy of my research proposal and I was then asked to make a presentation in 2 minutes of my work, which I did. One of the panellists queried me on printing my proposal on both pages. One of the panellists then asked if I had gotten a supervisor for my work. I said yes and I immediately presented my admission letter. I was then asked to talk about my MSc Project, which I did. After speaking for a while, one of the panellists congratulated me said I would hear from PTDF and wished me the very best. Right now, it is prayer mode [I am always in prayer mode] and keep declaring my faith-filled words.

They didn't ask for my publication, but when they indicated that they were done with documents, I told them I have a publication.

One of them said it's a good thing but they don't really consider it for MSc, when I wanted to put it back, he asked me to bring it and three of them checked it. But they clearly told me publication isn't considered.

Experience 38

Go With your academic transcript, especially that of Masters! It will give you an edge over others especially if your grade is good, for instance, your 2.2 might be 3.4 and another person's own might be 2.5, only your transcript will show it. If you go with your certificate only, they won't see your superior grade. The same thing applies to masters. If you show your transcript, they will know if you are of Distinction, Merit or pass.

They didn't ask for my publications. I don't know if they had sighted it in my uploaded CV. Because as for my proposal, it was the uploaded version they were using to interact with me, directly from their computer. I couldn't even give them the hard copies I prepared.

Experience 39

My interview was amazingly beautiful. I truly enjoyed every bit of it. It was more interactive than an interview. The basic questions were for me to introduce myself and briefly take them through

my research. After that, everything was just discussions on how I will achieve my research. What it can do to the industry. They were friendly. One of them even gave me scenarios on how what I'm trying to do affects a current project they are working on...I didn't want the interview to finish because I enjoyed it.

So, all that is expected from you is to understand the subject matter to which you're applying. Be calm and answer every question they throw at you with simplicity and try to be specific. Don't say what you can't prove.

Another thing is they said publications don't have marks this time around. I asked them specifically, and their response was that PDTF is not awarding marks for publications in PhD. I don't know about MSc.

Experience 40

I arrived at 11 am, my interview was scheduled for noon. I was directed to the waiting room where an official scanned the barcode on my invitation slip, after that, I waited alongside other applicants. Applicants were taken in batches for their interview according to their seating order. I was called in for my interview after so many hours, at that point I waited for some minutes then I was invited into the interviewing room. I greeted my interviewers, they introduced themselves and the interview began and lasted for about 7 minutes.

My interview time was noon, I went early though to avoid unseen circumstances. I was checked at the gate and arrived inside. Verification was ongoing, I did mine and sat down waiting my turn. When it was my turn, the appointment time was much of a big deal though. I went inside. The panel asked for my results and also asked if I was a member of a professional body. I am a member of NSE, so I answered yes. One of the panellists was so concerned that I had credit in economics, that it was a big deal to him (like in a good way). Then they asked why I wanted to study renewable energy and how it would benefit the oil industry. I answered to my best. And they asked about my current experience. After which they wished me well. That was it.

Experience 41

Just thought to share this.

Last year during my interview, one of the panellists asked me about one federal government agency that works in line with what I was applying to study. I knew the one he was asking for cos I knew the office as well, but I was too tense to remember. I was applying for Biotechnology

and he was asking of 'The National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA)'. These are some of the questions that can take you unawares. Just thought someone might need this.

Experience 42

I guess it depends on the panel.

For me, it was one by one. When they asked for SSCE I gave them two results and they picked the best grades from the two results for the necessary subjects.

Experience 43

We were told the order to arrange the documents in PH. We then placed the documents on the desk of one of the panellists when we entered the interview room. We did the sorting outside. Though I have watched the webinar section that was held. But then, how do you best answer a question that asks you to introduce yourself?

Some people might benefit... Kindly give your honest review.

I saw this response somewhere and decided to share:

"to create the perfect answer, focus on your professional career, academic experience, and personal life. Keep it brief and include your trajectory and future goals. Practice your answer to stay on point."

Experience 44

During or after your document check, tell us what you want to do while telling you can just be interrupted with a question and the answer may lead to another technical question and before you know it the whole interview is over.

Experience 45

Personally, they asked me about my course, which school I wanted to go to, why I wanted to study it and the relevance to the Oil and gas industry. That was all.

Experience 46

I watched a YouTube video where the scholar said her virtual interview was supposed to be by 9. am, she logged in and waited till past 12 before she was let in and interviewed. So, my advice is for you guys on virtual to just wait.

Experience 47

The first question was 2 in 1 though. What is your motivation and how the course is related to oil and gas or the petroleum industry type of question?

Nobody should panic. It's friendly.

Experience 48

I did my interview today at Uniport.

After scrutinizing my credentials, they started asking me about my statement and how my intended course of study is of benefit to the oil and gas industry.

Tip: as an MSc applicant, draft your research proposal and go with it. They do ask.

For PhD, prepare your research questions. I belong to SPE, and I thought that one is okay. But someone who was interviewed in PH says the more they are the more their marks.

Experience 49

Good morning, all,

My phone died so I couldn't share this yesterday then I forgot. Breakdown of my interview. My interview was set for noon, at the PTDF Towers Abuja. I arrived at 10 am but wasn't let in cause the hall was full, by 11 am they led those of us waiting to a large conference hall. I met those scheduled for 9 am still waiting, by 1 pm they announced a break till 2 pm. By 5 pm they moved my group to a hallway, where we waited again. My actual interview was by 5:15 and didn't last 8 minutes. When I was let in the interview room there were like 6 panels made up of 3 interviewers each. My interview table was empty so I stood waiting for like 10 seconds, then one man told me to sit. I greeted him and waited while he adjusted his portal from PhD to MSc. He asked for my name and we had a short conversation about the fact my surname is hyphenated, and he knew someone from Lagos with the same name who died. He then asked if I was married and laughingly made a comment about me going abroad to look for a husband 🙄 when I said no. I told him, I was actually engaged and our parents had approved the marriage and I sold it cause he said I must be happy in the relationship cause am smiling a lot.

PS: I am single 😏

He asked for my documents and put them under a light that showed some designs in invisible ink. At this point, my other panellist came to the table (they went to get tea 🙄).

I greeted and the first panellist showed them my documents and they pulled up my profile online. They asked me to discuss my SOP and then asked how my course relates to the oil and gas industry. They then graded my WAEC and my Graduate results. They asked for my professional body certification, I informed them I was still writing my exam for it and presented my letter of good standing and transcript from ACCA (I'm an accountant). The first panellist said that if I am given this opportunity I should ensure I get a distinction from my masters as I had a 2:1 BSc but my WAEC was very good. I assured him my aim it to get a distinction from the program. The first panellist mentioned I would benefit from looking into publications and gave me his name and the name of the other panellist who was a finance expert. He said I should look at their works online, then told me they were done. I thanked them and then, I left. It seems so long here but the actual interview was very short.

Experience 50

Good morning, all,

My interview was scheduled for noon at the PTDF tower in Abuja. I arrived there around 1140hrs but couldn't get in until past noon. After seating for most of the day, I was called in for my interview around 6:15 pm or thereabout. These were the few questions I was asked by my interviewers:

1. What is your name? (This led to a joke that I am partly Yoruba and all other jokes followed).
2. What is your motivation for this scholarship?

After that, a Prof said my results were impressive and that goes to show that my organisation has a lot of capacity (I'm a military personnel). So, he asked:

3. How do I intend to use the knowledge I would acquire from the scholarship to better my organisation?
4. What is the name of the school you are going to and why did you choose it?

That was all, I took a bow and left. I left the venue at about 6:37 pm. Congratulations and best of luck to everyone going for this.

Cheers...

Experience 51

Please how did you answer the question on how your course relates to the oil and gas industry?

I am in finance so I talked about the importance of transparency in financial procedures and how the oil and gas industry is a capital investment and therefore finance is very important. I said some other things I can't remember but You can Google other points.

At the end of the day, the questions you get depend on the panel of your geopolitical zone...Some might appear tough but would award you good points.

Experience 52

I had both tough and friendly 😊

The other man was asking me mathematical brain teasers because I read math...I didn't get all 😊 ...he was also impressed I belong to the same professional body as him, the Nigerian Mathematical Society.

The other man was interested in how I apply Data Science and AI to Oil and Gas...I answered all questions correctly.

The only woman amongst them who was a Liverpool fan was interested in if I was a Liverpool fan because I was applying to the University of Liverpool... unfortunately, I'm a Barcelona fan 😊

Some would appear friendly, and the outcome may not match their friendly face(s).

Experience 53

They wanted to kill me with questions 🤖 🤖 🤖 🤖 MSc oo

Experience 54

Almost the same here wo. *I was jejeli answering their questions.* And he was asking me on top of my answer. Asking me about the types of data collected in drilling logs. 😊 it was my mouth that caused it.

Experience 55

Yes

Basically, why do you want to study renewable energy engineering? How would you studying renewable energy engineering benefit the oil and gas industry?

Yes, I did my interview in Enugu today. As of the time I left, they said people without original results would not be interviewed.

Experience 56

It was a three-person panel that interviewed me and was friendly and jovial. One of them even said he liked my tie. I was asked two questions and I answered them and every other thing went fine. They placed priority on original results, WAEC and professional membership.

Experience 57

Be calm,

The questions are usually around

Why do you wanna jappa?

What is the relevance of what you intend to study in oil and gas?

Don't shoot yourself in the leg,

As you dey talk relevance, Don't call mighty phenomena...

Experience 58

My intended course is Energy and power systems engineering.

The first interviewer asked if it was a full or partial scholarship I said full, he then asked for the hard copy of my SOP, I passed it to him, and after going through it, he said he loved my SOP

😊 lol

Then the rest asked that I share it with them, and then they asked for all my certificates, I gave them, and they started recording my WAEC results, I didn't even go with my original WAEC result and it wasn't a big deal, after going through my first-degree certificate, they discovered I graduated with a first-class, the rest was history, they didn't even verify my professional membership or even viewed the body, the man just checked that it was 2 membership body, and he recorded it. After that, they asked me to tell them about my course and how it would be

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beneficial to the oil and gas industry in 2 minutes, as I was talking one of them cut in and said it's more than 2 minutes, I said sorry sir 😊 and he said he's fine with what I said and he doesn't have any question for me, he asked the rest, they all said no question, one of them asked which school I picked i told him, he asked where I'm working, I told him, he said to keep it up and I wish all the best, I said thank you sir and I left 😊. Now it's time to pray.

Experience 59

One: In summary, nobody cares about your discussion 😊😊 from my point of view, just be confident and don't fidget while talking. Again, none of the interviewers have the power to give u the scholarship, they will just score you finish and forward the results for final checks.

Another: They only have the power to score you based on your credentials from what I observed. There are points for every one of them, don't get me wrong, I'm just saying they can't award you the scholarship. It's highly competitive and it's a point-base so it's between u and the applicants in your state.

Experience 60

That is if you are mobile o, if you miss your way in Abuja you may do "cross country" before you come back to the point you missed. So to save time, use Bolt/Uber then when going back, you can find your way. This is true... joining public transport isn't an option on your way to the venue but when you are coming back. Take a cab that you can always stop and ask.

Experience 61

I'm at the PH centre. Please make sure you come along with a printout that has a barcode and a valid ID. Those that didn't have the printout were asked to go get it.

Experience 62

Discuss your SOP

How is it related to oil and gas

What course are you going for?

Mention one software for predictive maintenance

Show us professional bodies membership

Ibadan

Experience 63

I just finished my interview, PhD Port Harcourt (Environmental).

First, it was my BSc certificate that did not have a security code when it was scanned under the mercury lamp. I showed my BSc transcript and even logged into my school student portal to show all my details. Two of the interviewers told me to carry on with my presentation but the lady among them refused, that my degree certificate was fake.

They later asked me to step out while they had a very intense argument about my certificate. I was called in about 7 minutes later.

My other documents were checked and I Was told to present my proposal in 3 minutes. My work is on the remediation of oil spills, so I started by telling them Nigeria is currently the largest producer of crude oil in Africa. One of the interviewers said “Really”? I said yes, that we recently overtook Libya in May. He had to confirm from Google.

I took them through my research methodology. I was asked what is chitosan. What is an aerogel? How will you carry out the remediation? How much will it cost to undertake this project?

In the end, the interviewers commended my knowledge of chemistry and said I should find out why my degree certificate had no security code. They also advised me to apply for the lecturing role since I have a piece of good subject knowledge.

At this point, I can only hope for the best.

Experience 64

Morning all, I just finished my interview at Kaduna Center, Geoscience group

My experience with PhD

1. They checked my BSc and MSc certificate as well as the transcript
2. Also checked my certificate membership
3. Then they said in 5 minutes tell us what the research proposal is all about. As I was talking, one of the panellists will interrupt you with a question, and as you're answering the question, another question will pop up.
4. They asked if I was a lecturer and they didn't request my publications

My advice will be to direct your presentation to areas you can easily defend. Be intentional and up to date with happenings around your research.

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Like me saying Nigeria is currently the largest producer of crude oil in Africa, was intentional. I know someone will oppose and I can use this as an avenue to shine. It actually did happen!

Experience 65

My experience for MSc in Ibadan

1. I was asked what my research topic would be and upon mentioning that, I was asked how I intended to get samples. I mentioned the Shell company (he also asked if it was a downstream or upstream company), and the man said Why Shell, why a multinational company.

2. They asked for professional qualifications.

3. I noticed that the WAEC results have grades, so depending on the input.

4. They had a gist with me about how I had both Yoruba and Ibibio names, and said I was a true Nigerian 😂😂

The interview lasted about 5 hot minutes 😓😓

Experience 66

This is for people who have a background in finance.

My interview experience in Port Harcourt Center 9 am. I wanted to apply for Renewable Energy but the site limited me to applying for Petroleum Chemistry and Technology so I based my SOP on Petroleum Chemistry and Technology. However, I have been admitted to Renewable Energy at Cranfield University.

So, when I entered the panel, I was ushered to a seat. I saw one of my Professors on the panel as well. I was even scared he would tell them I was already running for a master's degree but he didn't, he was just official. They asked me to give them all my credentials and I did. Then the person in the middle asked me why I wanted to do a Master's degree, and I told them.

What do you want to research and what's its importance to the oil and gas industry? I told them.

As I was explaining, they saw I had an HND and Bachelor of Engineering with First class. The Professor said, it was because she had HND that she outshined to get first class in her BEng, I told him, you are right sir.

They looked at my WAEC and confirmed that my Biology was a B3, and the other man said yes.

So they started telling me that by now I should have known where to focus, and why should I go and do Petroleum Chemistry again after all these years of studying Petroleum. I tried telling them my research interest which is embedded in the course and that I want to be a renowned researcher and Professor. They said my research interest in hazardous substances was quite broad, by now I should have known if I wanted to go to the environment or petroleum or whatever.

Omo, at this time I had to tell them that I actually wanted to apply for Renewable Energy but the site limited me to apply for Petroleum Chemistry and Technology, immediately they calmed down.

And then asked, what school, I said Cranfield University and the middle person nodded his head and told the Prof that is a very good school.

The man at the extreme asked me, pointing at the Prof, do you know this man, I said yes and mentioned his name. He asked me, are you married, I said yes, are you going with your husband, I said no.

Then he said why, are you sure you want to leave him behind, "I said yes". He asked how many kids, I said two, and how old, I told them.

So, I told them my husband has been the one encouraging me to move ahead academically and they asked if he is in academics, and I said no.

Then the Prof said if her husband has been the one pushing her, then is fine, if is me I'll do the same. The Prof now said, let's release her, then they wished me good luck.

Note: I don't see the interview as an armed-to-the-teeth affair, they were friendly.

Experience 67

If you will be interviewed in PH, ensure you have your printout with the Barcode and any national identity card (international passport, driver's license, NIN, voter card)

Experience 68

Well, I was the last that they conducted the interview on Monday in Kaduna

So got a little hitch because they assigned the management to me while I was supposed to conduct my interview in the computing wing... I have to meet the PTDF guys to change from their system and log me on again

So, they were tired honestly because I was the last person they had conducted the interview on. They only introduced themselves collected my papers and asked me to introduce myself. I did that briefly, and the Prof said Why won't you sell yourself?... so, please tell them your class of degree and academic achievement.

He then asked me to introduce my proposal and after starting for 2 minutes the Prof said it was okay. *Then jist jist and more jists...about other refineries in Saudi, Iran etc.* No proposal questions asked! One asked me if I knew one Nigerian who was in Lancaster University, he was particular about the guy and I was able to tell him that same guy... he was amazed though...

He then asked why I didn't get Nigeria's professional body.. but still they took the two I have IAENG and ISACA.. he asked about ISACA I told him it was the Information Systems Audit and Control Association.

They then asked if I could take partial, I said they were in a better position being lecturers like me to know that I would go for a full scholarship. He asked if I had a question which I said no... we then finalised 😊

Experience 69

I am done with my interview

They asked me

1. To introduce myself
2. What is ethical hacking
3. Midstream
4. The name of my university
5. How can my course be relevant to the oil and gas industry

Experience 70

Good afternoon, all...

My interview in Enugu was a success and an interactive one. After verifying my documents, I was asked to summarize my research proposal, they asked me a few questions on the proposal which I answered and that was all. They encouraged me to have more than one professional body I belonged to. *Na God hand we dey.*

About the Author/Compiler

Amool, Shagbaor Hycent is a passionate sustainability advocate, researcher, and global education mentor. Originally from Nigeria, Amool holds a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural and Environmental Engineering from the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, and recently completed a Master's degree in Global Sustainability Engineering at Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom.

Shagbaor is also the creator and host of the popular YouTube channel Scholarships and Lifestyle With Ash, where he demystifies the scholarship process, shares practical tips on studying abroad, and explores the lifestyle transitions that come with international education. His candid storytelling and community-first approach have empowered many young Africans to pursue fully funded academic opportunities across the world.



Having personally navigated the PTDF MSc scholarship process, Shagbaor understands the challenges and anxieties applicants face. Through this project, he has curated dozens of screening stories from real PTDF candidates across Nigeria, drawn from WhatsApp groups and shared circles, each one offering unique insights, strategies, and reflections.

This book is a product of Shagbaor's mission to close the information gap for scholarship seekers. His hope is that *Voices from the PTDF Scholarship Application Journey* will not only inform but also inspire future scholars to aim high, prepare wisely, and carry the torch of national development.